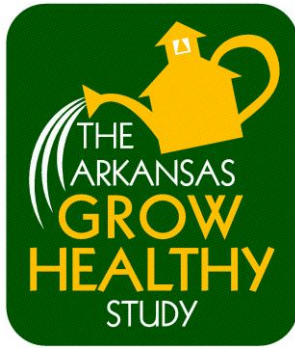




## Farm to School self-assessment guide

Conducting a self-assessment is an important first step to evaluating the kitchen facility, staffing and storage requirements, and methods of procurement needed to purchase any type of food or services, including fresh local food items. Evaluating the current and potential capacity of your food service operations can give school food service professionals an idea of where to begin. You may be surprised to learn what local food items you are already serving in your school meal programs, or what could be easily adapted.

1. Who will be coordinating your school district's Farm to School activities?
2. Is there a State Farm to School Coordinator to assist with this process?
  - Consult your State Departments of Education and Agriculture
3. Is your school food service self-operation or does the district contract with a food service management company?
4. What type(s) of kitchen(s) do you have?
  - Central (Satellite) kitchen?
  - Full service kitchen at each school site (e.g., self-preparation kitchens)?
  - Minimal cooking capabilities at each school site (e.g., limited to heat and serve)?
  - A combination of the above?
5. Can your staff accommodate the purchase of local unprocessed food items?
  - Is there a need for culinary training (e.g., knife skills, cooking skills)?
  - Is there a need for additional staff or an adjustment of staff hours?
6. Can your current equipment (including storage) accommodate the purchase and processing of local unprocessed food items?
  - Is there a need for additional processing equipment?
  - Is there a need for additional storage equipment?



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7. How does your school district and each school site currently receive food items?
  - Does your school district have delivery trucks?
  - Is there transportation or delivery needs for the school district and school sites?
  - Can adjustments be made to how food is delivered or transported to the school district or school sites?
8. What local food items are you buying already?
  - Consult your contracted suppliers.
9. What local food items are currently available through your current suppliers?
  - Consult your contracted suppliers.
10. What local food items are available within your community? What food items could you be purchasing?
  - Consult local farmers
11. Can your current school menus easily incorporate local food items?
12. What food items are currently in your inventory?
13. How much of the unprocessed local food item is needed for a recipe or menu you are currently serving?
14. What are student preferences?
  - Consider conducting taste-testings to determine student preferences
15. What Federal, State or local procurement requirements apply (e.g., small purchase threshold)?
16. Are there additional food safety practices that need to be considered when purchasing unprocessed food items?
  - Is there a need for additional food safety training?